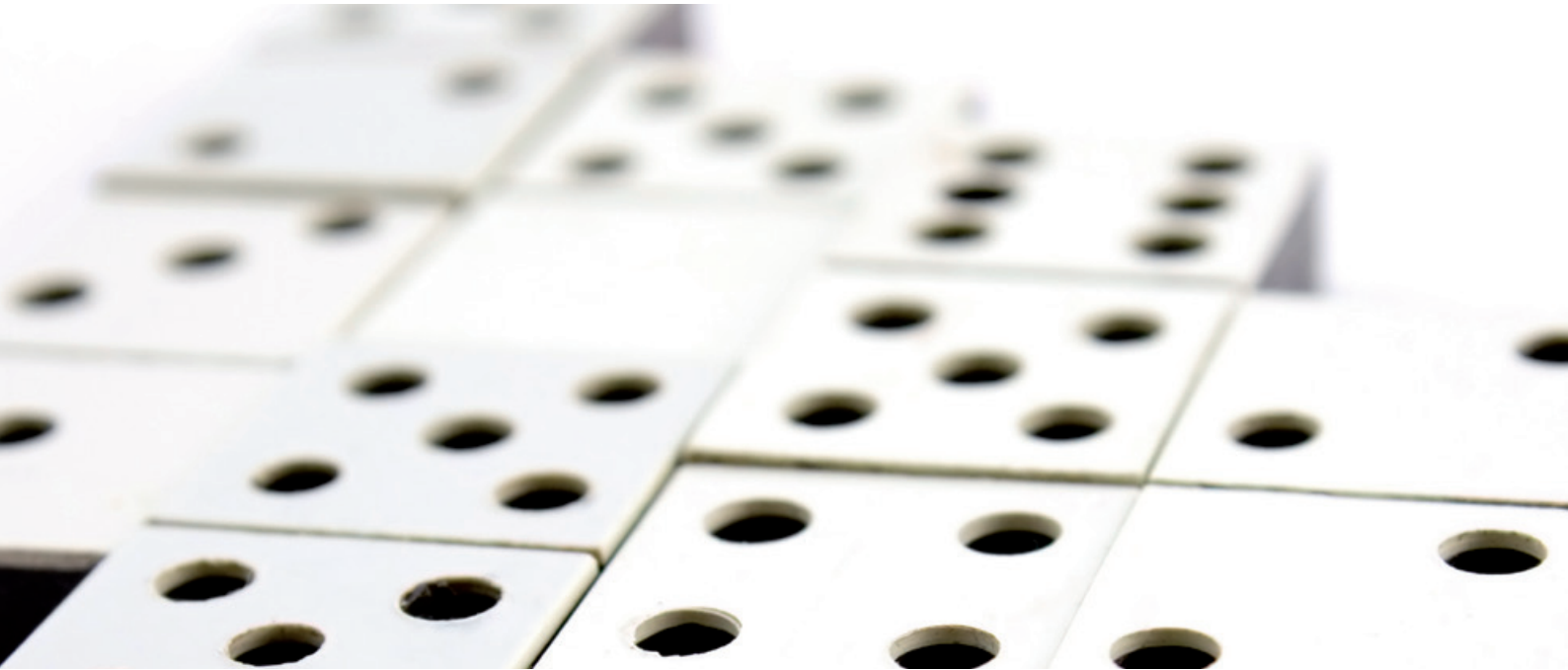


BPM

Quo vadis?

Challenges and opportunities for Business Process Management

By Stijn Viaene, Joachim Van den Bergh,
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Foreword



Six years of intensive research led by Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School in collaboration with its business partner MÖBIUS and the BPM Network have culminated in this position statement on the strategic positioning and current and future challenges of Business Process Management. We are extremely grateful for the invaluable first hand experiences we were offered by our research member organisations and their enthusiastic representatives over the last six years. It was through their eyes that we could see the immense impact of “going for process” and the challenges that come with this conscious choice.

This paper is an important steppingstone along the road to renewed research collaboration between Vlerick, MÖBIUS and the Network’s committed research member organisations. The BPM landscape has evolved very rapidly these last years, so it seems only natural that we should revisit the initial research proposal with a view to the next period of research collaboration. Read on and find out for yourself what our research has revealed about the issues and challenges that face those trying to put BPM into practice.

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Introduction

Many enterprises have taken shape as collections of specialised departments and business units during the last century. Industrialisation coupled with technological progress came with lots of specialisation. The more prominent the specialisation focus became, however, the larger the gaps between specialisation silos became and the louder the cry for business process integration. That is why the management discipline dubbed Business Process Management (BPM) received ever more attention. In these last six years, we have seen many of our research member organisations try to put it to work in a business context that is becoming increasingly complex. Some of the main reasons for this growing complexity are the electronic interconnectivity of business actors, globalisation, turbulent markets, the increasing sophistication of products and services, and the growing expectations of customers. Therefore, the challenge facing BPM is to present itself as a discipline enabling enterprises to master this complexity with flexible and efficient business processes.

Many businesses are looking for a new vision and new ways of achieving it as a strategy for survival in tough times. We believe BPM can help deliver this. But it will require BPM to evolve from a mere methodology, i.e. a stepwise, structured approach to improving business processes – often synonymous for making them more efficient, into a holistic management discipline that takes an integrated approach to the organisation and its business as a whole.

BPM must aim at more than process efficiencies. Certainly, many enterprises are likely to benefit from streamlining and automating their business processes, but BPM can help them achieve so much more. Unfortunately, some still consider BPM as impeding and even hostile to innovation. Our experience has proven otherwise, however. We have seen companies successfully position BPM as a core ingredient of their organisational capacity to innovate. Linking process management to information analysis is one of the ways to accomplish this. Increasingly companies are discovering the potential of working with information to enhance and innovate business processes. BPM need not stifle creativity, even if we have witnessed certain cases where it did. Synthesising these experiences and describing under which conditions creativity and innovation might thrive continue to be a key goal of our research.

The spirit of BPM has been around for a while. End-to-end thinking, taking explicit ownership of business processes, focusing on the customer, and organising for results, form the backbone of a vision for management popularised by gurus such as Michael Hammer and Thomas Davenport towards the end of the last century. These thinkers have

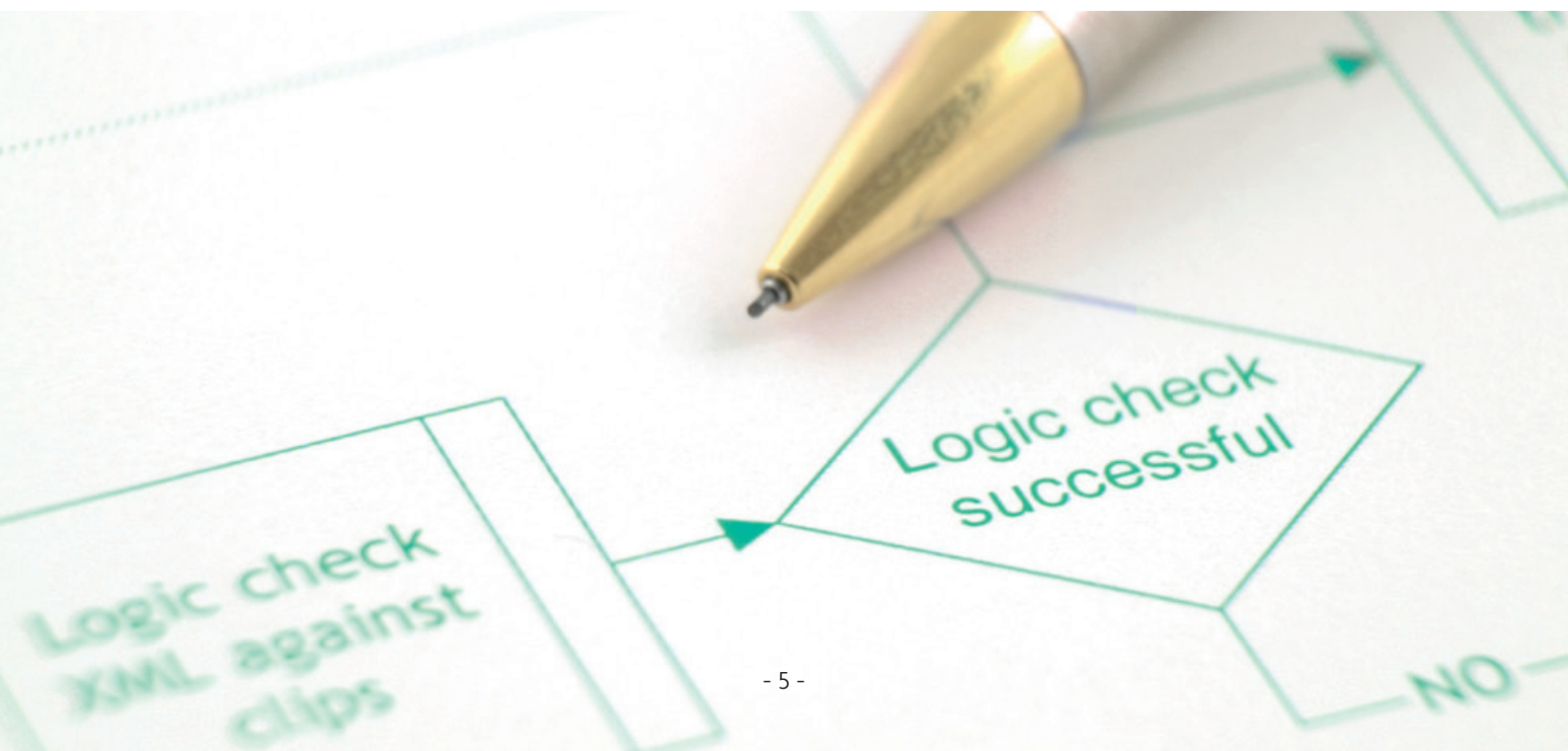
“An organisation is only as effective as its processes,”

Rummler and Brache.



inspired multitudes of management students in every sector. But talking the talk is always easier than walking the walk. Gradually, however, our member companies are turning increasingly towards best practice. Learning by doing, they are constructing the road needed to deliver the goods promised by BPM. We want to continue to support them, listen to their experiences, offer a sounding board, coin lessons learned and share them with an ever broader business audience.

Adopting a process orientation means putting a vision into practice by making and committing to deliberate choices for organising and executing work. In this document we outline some of the most prominent issues and challenges faced by companies that have made the choice for BPM. The structure and contents of this paper are the result of a debate between all the participants in our research network, following six years of researching the evolution and state of the practice of BPM. The position taken in this document is meant to focus future “research for practice” on addressing what we think will be essential BPM challenges in the years to come.



BPM: a story of convergence

The term “Business Process Management” started to get significant traction in the business community some ten years ago. It was used by enlightened process practitioners and management gurus to signal a necessary break with the past. That past was characterised by a number of management disciplines that worked largely in isolation but still shared a common goal. Mathias Weske¹ describes BPM as follows: “Business process management includes concepts, methods and techniques to support the design, administration, configuration, enactment and analysis of business processes”.

The groundbreaking work of W. Edwards Deming in Japan in the early 1950s, which already then stressed the importance of process awareness and value flow mapping, left a sizable footprint on modern-day management. Among its most notable offspring are Total Quality Management (TQM), Six Sigma, Lean, and Business Process Reengineering (BPR). Though every one of these management movements evolved largely as a separate discipline – zooming in on the problem from different perspectives – they all share the same ambition: better enterprise management².

BPM combines the best elements of all these worlds, emphasising their common ground rather than their differences. It borrows from the individual disciplines so as to provide “a tool for every problem,” based on the whole range of perspectives and aspects of enterprise management. This, for one, means that approaches rooted in the tradition of continuous improvement (e.g. TQM) and those rooted in more radical improvement ideologies (e.g. BPR) are no longer at odds. They make for alternative scenarios evaluated on a project-by-project basis. Moreover, a larger-scale business improvement programme is likely to present a choice of improvement scenarios that can be blended. Being process-oriented first and foremost means making every choice mindfully.

The notion of “enterprise” deserves attention. What has proven most productive in the context of BPM is conceiving of the enterprise as a complex ecosystem for organising work, which features a large number of engaging components, and whose aggregate behaviour is the result of selective strategic and structural pressures and self-organisation. The notion “holistic”³ is often associated with BPM to emphasise the attention paid to the different perspectives and aspects of studying and improving the enterprise as an ecosystem. Moreover, given the increased turbulence in the environment, this ecosystem needs to be constantly monitoring that environment so that it can react rapidly to opportunities



“BPM is a mandatory business capability,”

Smith and Fingar.

and threats. For BPM professionals, the enterprise's business processes – end-to-end – are the primary entry point as well as the final point of reference for mastering this ecosystem's complexity. In the BPM world, business processes are not just executed. They are studied, evaluated and purposefully improved, in conjunction with an organisational structure and culture, to enable desirable system behaviour.

We have seen many of our research member organisations and their BPM support organisations gradually try to embrace the enterprise as a whole and to link together the entire range of support processes, including organisational development, Information Technology (IT) management, performance management and resource planning. The initial focus on modelling business processes – though proven useful for many organisations as an introduction to the world of BPM – in most of our member organisations has made way for a more complex but richer and more rewarding view of BPM, reflecting convergence and systems thinking. BPM support organisations have moved on to emphasise their coordinating and facilitating role.

Still, these are relatively recent phenomena. Best practice is still rather rare. Moreover, BPM advocates continue to report how hard it is to instil a process mindset into an enterprise and make it adopt a pragmatic and sustainable approach to BPM. If we succeed in making our future BPM Network meetings into the lively exchanges of experiences and lessons learned they have proven to be for the past six years, we will be all set to see some great new insights emerge.

Suggested readings:

The New Economics for Industry, Government, Education by W. Edwards Deming
Business Process Management: The Third Wave by Howard Smith and Peter Fingar

¹ M. Weske, *Business Process Management: Concepts, Languages, Architectures* (Springer Verlag, 2007).

² S. Viaene and J. Willems, “Corporate Performance Management: Beyond Dashboards and Scorecards,” *Journal of Performance Management* (2007, 20 (1) pp 13-32). The authors associated “better enterprise management” with the following management features : (1) the use of metrics to guide decision making; (2) the use of a balanced set of metrics, i.e. reflecting the extensive span of business objectives; (3) the right-time delivery of actionable management information; (4) horizontally integrated management, i.e. cutting across functional and other organisational silos; (5) vertically integrated management, i.e. linking strategy formulation to the operational execution; and (6) closed-loop management, i.e. emphasizing continuous improvement and double-loop learning.

³ P. Willaert, J. Van den Bergh, J. Willems and D. Deschoolmeester, “The Process-Oriented Organisation: A Holistic View. Developing a Framework for Business Process Orientation Maturity,” *Proceedings of the 5th International BPM Conference* (Brisbane, September 24-27, 2007).

Strategic positioning of BPM

We clearly associate BPM with an enterprise-wide aspiration. BPM is, however, but a means to an end. That end can be varied. For that reason, the individual enterprise's instantiation of BPM will need to be designed to match that end. For example, the answer to the question of what it takes for this or that organisation to become process-oriented is very likely to be different from the stance of each of the different strategic value disciplines⁴, i.e. operational excellence, customer intimacy and product leadership. However, BPM can and should serve to leverage any strategy coined to create a corporate identity.

Operational excellence and BPM are often mentioned in one and the same breath. Indeed, companies such as Ryanair, ING Direct and AB-InBev are primary examples of how a relentless focus on efficiency, streamlined and standardised operations, cutting out waste and reducing variability, can be a source of competitive advantage and a strong enabler of fast growth. Lean and Six Sigma practices almost naturally come to mind in the context of scientific, analytical process management. They make the link between operational excellence and BPM most tangible. Arguably, the benefits of using these methods are primarily situated in the area of operational excellence.

The benefits of BPM extend, however, beyond the realm of operational excellence into the areas of customer intimacy and product leadership.

Product and service offerings can be turned into great customer experiences through carefully managed business processes. The trick is to scrutinise every customer interaction, every "moment of truth" in an end-to-end value chain in view of creating that unforgettable customer experience. Transparency of and explicit attention to business processes is a pre-condition, however, to know exactly what to act on, when to act, and how to do it. Customer loyalty and sustainable profit margin generation will be the result of an organisation's capability to make its business processes follow individual or aggregate customer profiles and life cycles. Product, service and process management automatically need to be intimately connected. We have witnessed not only for-profit organisations take this stance. Among our research partners we have had healthcare providers looking to improve patient care, and government administrations aspiring to become more citizen-centric.

BPM equally can be instantiated to support product leadership strategies. Companies operating in dynamic markets focusing on product development, innovation, design, time-to-market and top quality might find a great ally in BPM. For example, we have

“Process innovation is meaningful only if it improves a business in a way that is consistent with its strategy,”

Thomas Davenport.

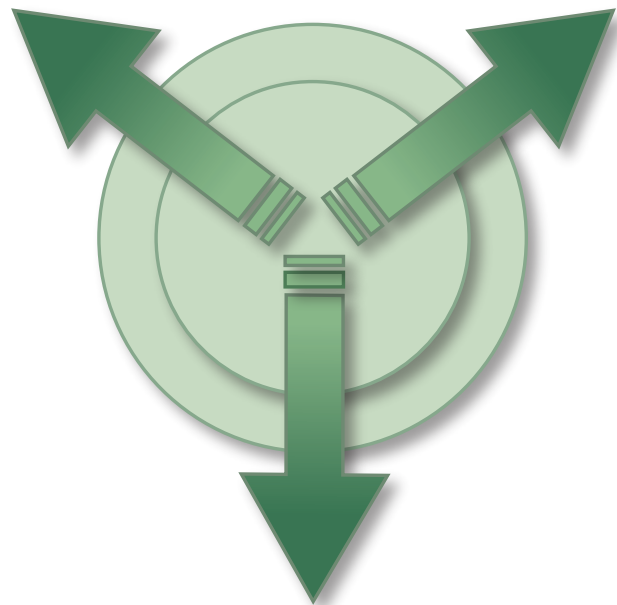


evidence of high-tech engineering and pharmaceutical companies using BPM approaches to master the complexity and total quality of innovation funnels, and to streamline handovers between R&D, engineering and frontline operations. A recent Flanders District of Creativity report⁵ provides evidence of the criticality of well-designed operational and managerial processes to the successful execution of product leader strategies.

Again, becoming process-oriented is not a strategy in itself. For BPM to support an enterprise, it needs to be fine-tuned to the strategic choices of that enterprise as well as incorporate the latter's fundamental strategic trade-offs. In the absence of strategic choices, it is doubtful that the high expectations cast onto BPM at the outset will ever materialise.

**Product
Leadership**

**Customer
Intimacy**



**Operational
Excellence**

Suggested readings:

Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance

by Michael E. Porter

The Discipline of Market Leaders: Choose Your Customers, Narrow Your Focus, Dominate Your Market by Michael Treacy and Fred Wiersema

⁴ M. Treacy and F. Wiersema, “Customer Intimacy and Other Value Disciplines,” *Harvard Business Review* (1993, Vol. 71, Issue 1, pp. 84-93).

⁵ K. Verweire and J.E. Revollo, “Sustaining Competitive Advantage through Product Innovation: How to Achieve Product Leadership in Service Companies”, Flanders District of Creativity report (2010).

Customer: the “outside-in” view



Having the customer in mind when designing and executing work processes is paramount for organisations to reap the benefits of BPM. This, however, requires taking on an outside-in perspective on the organisation’s business processes. This may sound obvious but is quite often forgotten in practice. Time after time we have observed organisations practicing BPM getting so deeply involved in studying the mechanics of individual work activities that they forget to ask that single most important question: Why would a customer – internal or external to the organisation – be willing to pay (extra) for this? In other words, your benchmark for establishing the added value of change and evolution always ought to be, in the first place, customer value and customer need.

Fortunately, more and more organisations have become aware of the need to infuse their BPM approaches with a customer focus. They are devising ways to systematically capture “the voice of the customer” in the context of improving their business processes. This can be achieved in multiple ways, for example by using customer observation, focus groups, interviews, and surveys. Analysing data produced in the context of executing customer-facing processes, often enriched with externally acquired data sources, has also proven of great added value to some organisations. One could easily argue that working with customer data has increasingly become a qualifier for companies to compete and remain synchronised with the ever more mobile and powerful customer. Products and services are turned into “solutions” and service firms are positioning themselves as “partners”.

“If you don’t have a customer, you don’t have a business,”

Michael Hammer.



So, why not go one step further and make the customer part of your value network? Why not look at your customer as a co-creator of your business and its processes? We see it happening more and more, with companies embracing the age of social software and the “web 2.0” to organise, for example, customer-based feedback cycles and experience-sharing, and customer-based product or service design. The way corporations such as Lego⁶, Ketnet and Connections⁷ are trying to make this work could serve as an example to many. Bekaert is another one⁸. The company is set to reap the benefits of collective creativity and open innovation by using web 2.0 technology for the design and governance of their innovation processes⁹.

End-to-end thinking promotes a focus on the customer. True end-to-end thinkers understand that every step of a process, even the most distant one hidden in the back-office, might make or break the relationship with the customer. Of special note are, of course, those sub-processes in the end-to-end business process where the organisation consciously makes strategic trade-offs that differentiate its customer value proposition from that of the competition. Taking this perspective on BPM seriously almost automatically requires organisations to gather competitive intelligence alongside customer intelligence. If not to acquire a view on competitive advantage, it will surely serve to establish the nature of the work that could be called a competitive necessity in an industry and thus may serve as a benchmark for any process that is proclaimed best practice or operationally excellent.

Unsurprisingly, the biggest obstacle to creating true customer-centricity in action remains the silo organisation. Indeed, a lot of organisations today are still built around products and geography, rather than end-to-end customer responsibility¹⁰. Business processes end up being broken into pieces and locally rather than globally optimised.

Suggested readings:

Competing on Analytics: The New Science of Winning by Thomas H. Davenport and Jeanne G. Harris

The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage by Joseph Pine and James Gilmore

⁶⁻⁸ See www.lego.com, www.ketnet.be, www.connections.be, www.bekaert.com

⁹ S. De Hertogh, S. Viaene and G. Dedene, “Governing Web 2.0: Grounding Principles to Get the Most out of Enterprise 2.0 Investments,” *Communications of the ACM* (2010 - forthcoming).

¹⁰ “The Outside-In Approach to Customer Service,” Q&A with Ranjay Gulati, Harvard Business School, *Working Knowledge* (February 16, 2010).

A value-oriented lens for IT

The benefits of any IT investment will only materialise if workers and managers actually change the way they do things. Having studied IT investments for quite some years, we would consider this a fairly safe and uncontroversial statement. It does have an interesting implication, though: value creation with IT is best studied in the context of an enterprise's organisation of work, that is, its business processes. In other words, business processes provide a value-oriented lens for establishing the value of IT investments.

It takes little imagination to see how operationally dependent our contemporary enterprises have become on IT for the execution of their business processes. From the 1960s and 1970s onwards we have seen IT in organisations evolve from a mere tool for the execution of expert activities into an integral part of the very fabric of the organisation's execution of work¹¹. Indeed, throughout organisations, piles of paperwork and less efficient human labour have been replaced with automated processes. An observation from our research is that this drive for cost reduction and increased throughput continues to be a primary reason why enterprises continue to spend money on IT.

Automation has still another important advantage for BPM: the information produced in the context of the automated business processes allows for monitoring the performance of the executed processes. Combining this process performance monitoring capability with advanced capabilities for information warehousing and information analysis may give rise to a powerful enterprise performance management system, capable of supporting the operation, growth and transformation of the enterprise.

It is safe to say that enterprises have become much more complex since the beginning of the industrial age. We have moved into the age of the "network organisation" where, instead of enterprises being conceived of as monolithic entities or vertically integrated value chains, they are now considered essentially open and carefully orchestrated value networks of autonomous, outsourced business components¹². These components embody sub-processes of the network organisation's overall business process. These notions of the "networked enterprise" and of the "orchestration of business components" in value networks are born of an explosion in connectivity brought about by IT. By working out open standards for how information is exchanged between business components, enterprises hope to be able to create a type of flexible enterprise that is able to respond fast to change by having more easily reconfigurable business processes¹³.

The model-driven disassembly of business processes and the development of structured and systematic ways to reconnect their components in different ways to form new executable business model constellations constitute the essence of an architectural BPM capability.

“IT success isn’t just about IT. It is about the effectiveness of people and organisations,”

Steven Alter.



Architecting has proven an invaluable tool for mastering dependencies and risks. The notion of “enterprise architecture” is often associated with BPM. The enterprise part stresses the importance of architecting processes from an end-to-end perspective and of being able to easily connect the logical models and designs of business processes to their actual (IT) implementation. The latter is of particular importance for tracking and tracing change and safeguarding change consistency.

Ideally, all of the above capabilities eventually come together in the form of a Business Process Management System (BPMS). A BPMS constitutes a software environment that allows business and IT to jointly work on architecting a portfolio of enterprise business processes, and to monitor and analyse the performance of their execution in view of improving and innovating the way of doing business.

It goes without saying that, with reference to both the promise of technology for BPM as well as an organisation’s operational dependency on it, no enterprise approach to BPM can exist without embodying an alignment between business and IT people. For one, six years of research have shown that it generally pays off to involve IT people early in business process improvement initiatives.



Suggested readings:

Process Innovation: Reengineering Work through Information Technology
by Thomas H. Davenport

The Zachman Framework for Enterprise Architecture: A Primer for Enterprise Engineering and Manufacturing by John A. Zachman

¹¹ O.A. El Sawy, “The IS Core IX: The 3 Faces of IS Identity: Connection, Immersion and Fusion,” *Communications of the AIS* (2003, 12, pp. 588-598).

¹² P.B. Evans and T.S. Wurster, “Strategy and the New Economics of Information,” *Harvard Business Review* (Sep/Oct 1997, Vol. 75, Issue 5, pp. 70-82).

¹³ G.T. Ferguson, “Have Your Objects Call My Objects,” *Harvard Business Review* (2002, Vol. 80, Issue 6, pp. 138-143).

Process governance



Today's workers operate in multidimensional matrix organisations. Gone are the days of top-down management by a select few. Also, employees now are required to wear more than just a functional or departmental hat. To manage the enterprise as a whole, dimensions such as geography, product, customer, etc., also need to be taken into consideration.

From a BPM perspective, specifying a framework of decision-making structures, roles and processes that is conducive to multidimensional organisational change and interaction across boundaries is a key factor for success. Who defines the organisation's view on its business processes? Which roles are to be involved when decisions are made about business processes? Which concerns take priority in situations of choice or conflict? How does the decision-making process proceed? What room do we have for exceptions? Who has the final say (or control over the budget)? These are all important governance questions that need to be addressed in matrix organisations. The answer to these rules-of-engagement type of questions will be a function of a specific organisation's strategic choices as well as of its organisational culture.

The tear you have in multidimensional matrix organisations and the need for alignment are probably most tangible when being involved in business process improvement projects. Therefore, integrating BPM rationale, guidelines and best practice into the management of process projects makes perfect sense. One of the crucial assignments here is to make process and project management methodologies complement each other. Following the same logic, project and process management support structures ought to be linked in order to support process projects.

One thing we discovered in our research is that few organisations are looking for yet another support office. What they really need is a careful examination of how their existing support structures such as the quality management office, the business project management office, the enterprise programme management office, the office of strategy management and the business process management office can be most effectively configured to enable them to achieve the shared goal of improving enterprise management.

“As continuous change becomes the natural state in most industries, lateral processes become the principal means of coordinating activities,”

Jay R. Galbraith.



As a matter of fact, we have seen the notion of BPM and, almost paradoxically, the BPM office, sold to executive sponsors as a way of avoiding a further proliferation of support offices tied to individual methodologies and mitigating the lack of co-ordination and integration between the existing support structures/offices. Make no mistake, however, rearranging support configurations can be as tedious as reorganising business processes. Around the corner lure turf wars, personal agendas and a lot of office politics. Still, the combination of the above argument with the ability to clearly establish an organisation's particular need for end-to-end thinking, focusing on the customer, and organising for results is typically what it takes to launch a BPM journey with top management support.

Whatever the initial business case for BPM and its organisational support structure, in the end the value of a BPM investment can only be established if it can be proven that there has been organisation-wide progress in making and implementing operational, tactical and strategic decisions that are in fact process-oriented. Developing a BPM capability in a company is akin to keeping a plane in the air while constantly rebuilding its engines in a turbulent atmosphere. Ideally, its development should start on day one and proceed in a structured and systematic way. Where there is very little prior BPM experience in an organisation or top management buy-in is not solid, it makes sense to complete a pilot project before going full steam ahead. A pilot project can serve to overcome initial scepticism about BPM in the organisation¹⁴.

Assessing an organisation's BPM maturity¹⁵ and identifying which core processes are most in need of reconfiguring should enable the organisation to get off to a good start. Care should be taken to develop a roadmap with specific steps that will lead to the BPM maturation of that specific enterprise. Legacy and “as is” do matter, in general. With each step, progress should be made that is synchronised along different capability dimensions and based on a holistic view of the enterprise. Leading capabilities may represent an overinvestment; lagging capabilities may debilitate the system. These considerations will help establish the appropriate investment in the process support organisation at the outset, as well as along the way.

Suggested readings:

Business Process Change: A Guide for Business Managers and BPM and Six Sigma Professionals by Paul Harmon

Business Process Management: Concepts, Languages, Architectures by Matthias Weske

¹⁴ S. Viaene and B. Cumps, “CRM Excellence at KLM Royal Dutch Airlines,” *Communications of AIS* (Vol. 2005, Issue 16, pp. 539-558).

¹⁵ P. Willaert, J. Van den Bergh, J. Willems and D. Deschoolmeester, “The Process-Oriented Organisation: A Holistic View. Developing a Framework for Business Process Orientation Maturity,” *Proceedings of the 5th International BPM Conference* (Brisbane, September 24-27, 2007).

Towards a culture that fosters process



Proceeding on the path to BPM maturity requires more than a roadmap, or a cookbook of best-practice recipes for managing change. It takes more than training people to use a toolkit of methodologies and techniques. BPM aspires to change people's behaviour throughout the organisation. While delegating responsibility for BPM to a business process support office makes little sense, using such an office to catalyse an organisation's ambition of embedding the capability for systematically improving business processes into its very structure and culture has proved to be a very viable strategy: it bestows responsibility for making BPM work on every worker and manager in the organisation.

The following story about "The Three Bricklayers" is a popular tale amongst BPM evangelists¹⁶

Once there were three bricklayers busily working at their trade. When asked what they were doing, the first man answered gruffly "I'm laying bricks," without ever taking his eyes from his work. The second man replied, "I'm putting up a wall." But the third man said enthusiastically and with obvious pride, "I'm building a cathedral!"

Obviously, the third bricklayer serves as the exemplary one. What speaks for him are his ability to see the common objective, rather than just his task at hand, and his positive attitude towards what he is doing. Organisations will need the same focus and energy to make BPM work.

Part of the deal with BPM is stimulating employees across the organisation to care about the bigger picture, collaborate across departments to realise the common goals, and constantly consider how their work or changes to it might impact and be impacted by the work of others. Creating an organisation that is capable of improving itself is not just a function of strategy and structure, but also requires a culture capable of embracing system change¹⁷.

*“A company is no better or worse
than the employees it has,”*

Kaoru Ishikawa.



Securing strong executive sponsorship is paramount for executing a BPM vision. However, our research has shown that top-down approaches for integrating BPM into organisations are most successful when combined with incentive mechanisms and different forms of “viral influencing” to encourage and spread desirable behaviour across the organisation. Examples are: increasing the distribution of process information and knowledge, promoting BPM experience-sharing, emphasising the process aspects in the applied project and improvement methodologies, offering incentives to potential viral influencers, enabling BPM communities of practice, integrating BPM roles into the line organisation, having the members of the business process office coach and facilitate by walking around, ostensibly and regularly celebrating BPM successes, and having actual beneficiaries of process improvement testify to BPM’s worth.

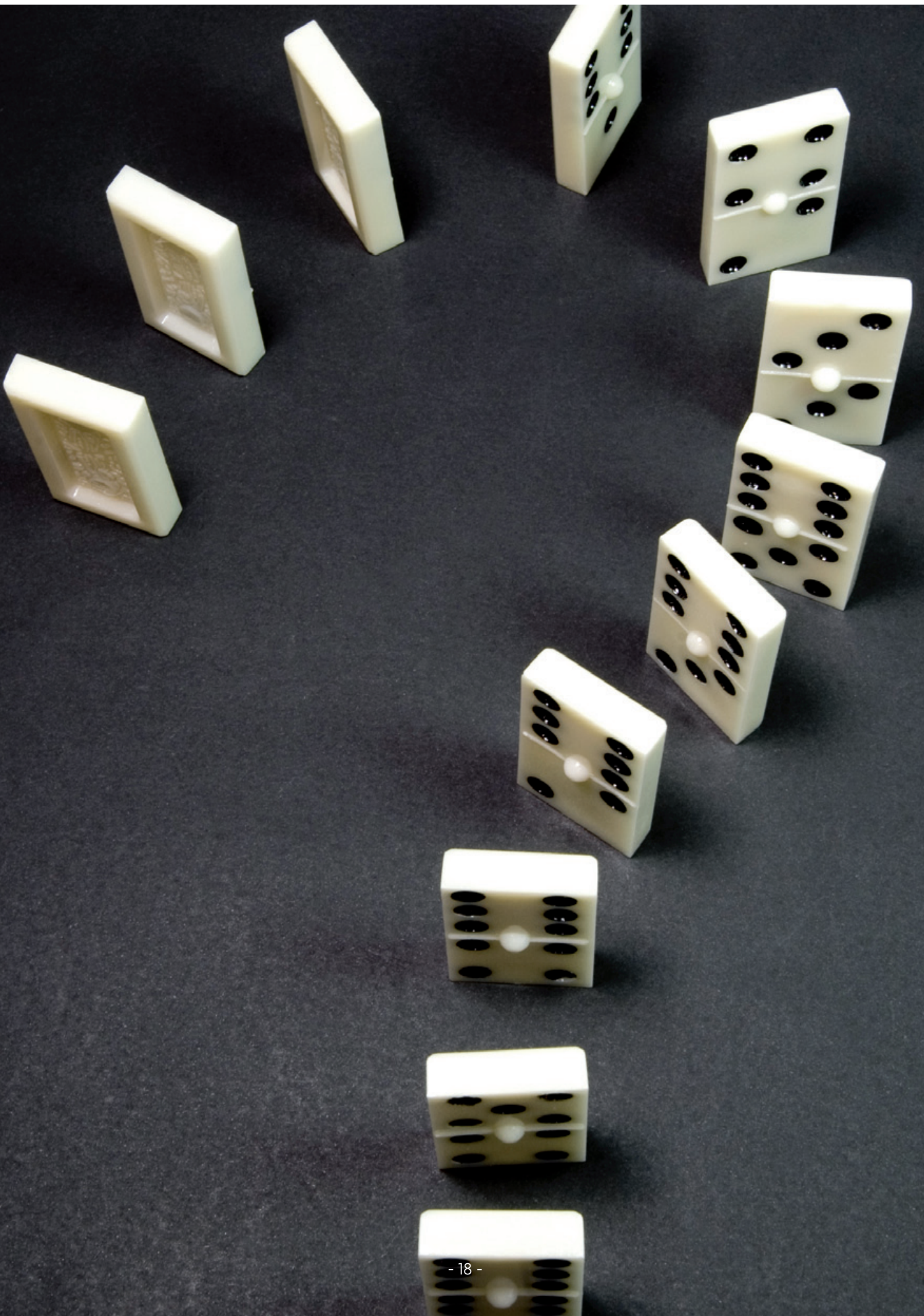
Creating a process-oriented organisation does not happen overnight. Organisations and their people need to learn how to do this. What the experience at our member organisations suggests is that this learning ideally starts with formulating a decent initial plan or roadmap, and then progresses through learning-by-doing. Successful organisations design a dynamic plan and then build capabilities that allow this plan to be executed dynamically. Nurturing a climate that encourages employees to exchange experiences across boundaries and learn-by-doing is paramount. Research has shown that failure of an organisation to truly involve its employees in BPM, failure to empower them to think about and make business process decisions themselves, and failure to organise for end-to-end teamwork are true inhibitors to BPM success. This is a valuable insight for BPM governance and the design of BPM methodologies: these should be designed to promote, enable and support a learning organisation. And, of course, this principle also applies to the organisation’s recruitment, competence and talent management.

Suggested readings:

The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization by Peter M. Senge
Leading Change by John Kotter

¹⁶ Anonymous.

¹⁷ M. Hammer, “The Process Audit,” *Harvard Business Review* (2007, Vol. 85, Issue 4, pp 111-123).



What next?

In 2004 we started on a journey of exploring the fascinating world of BPM with the goal of conducting useful and pioneering BPM research. At the time, we had numerous questions and relatively few answers that could be put into practice. Now, six years later, we are happy to be able to claim that we have produced many valuable insights and best practices as a result of our intense collaboration with our dedicated group of BPM Network member organisations.

The journey, however, is not finished. It is time to raise the bar and reach for the next level of maturity in BPM. The discussion in this document is intended to stimulate old and new BPM Network members to sign up for the next phase of collaboration. We all know that there is plenty of room for improvement, not to mention the new challenges posed by a turbulent and rapidly changing business environment. By continuing our efforts to share, study and synthesise actual BPM practice, we will be able to add a next chapter to our BPM “book of knowledge” and help all pioneering BPM practitioners to achieve success.

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About the BPM Network

The Vlerick Business Process Management Network has been established by Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School and brings together members of the business community that have experience with Business Process Management (BPM). The BPM Research Centre has been created to offer high-level and up-to-date information on BPM (methodologies, benchmark results, best practices, lessons learned, used tools, etc.), and to develop, detect, validate and distribute new management concepts and theories in the field of BPM in the Belgian and European context.

Former and current members of the BPM Network include Antwerpse Waterwerken, Belgacom, Brussels Airport, Delhaize, De Post, Dexia, Eandis, Jessaziekenhuis, Openbaar Psychiatrisch Zorgcentrum Geel, Pioneer, Sara Lee and Stad Gent.

More information is available on www.vlerick.com/bpm.



About Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School

Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School has deep academic roots. Founded in 1953 by Professor Baron André Vlerick, the School has evolved into the leading business school in Belgium and one of the top business schools in Europe. The School benefits from the amassed knowledge of the two largest Belgian universities, Ghent University and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

Vlerick focuses on management education and research to meet the needs of managers and entrepreneurs at different stages in their careers. The School offers an International MBA programme and numerous training programmes for company executives including an Executive Master Class in BPM. Close connections with the international corporate world lead to practice-based research in cooperation with numerous companies and organisations. Thousands of Vlerick graduates are successfully operating at top management levels in manufacturing, services, consultancy, and the public sector in over 100 countries.

More information is available on www.vlerick.com.



About MöBIUS

In MöBIUS' BPM methodology the demands and expectations of your customers are the basis for the process layout. We consider the processes to be the heart of every organisation. Human resource planning and ICT system layout are directly linked to customer expectations and processes. MöBIUS considers a BPM project to be successful only when your processes allow you to both serve your customers and carry out your company strategy at the same time.

MöBIUS, a spin-off of Ghent University, is an international authority in the domain of consultancy and implementation within Supply Chain & Business Process Management. Our objective is to coach our clients to become the best in their class. We do so by optimising processes and by linking employees' attitude, competences and IT systems to meet business objectives. The more than 120 highly-qualified consultants at our offices in Belgium, England, France and the Netherlands are passionate about improving service, reducing costs and compiling solutions for (complex) business environments and issues.

More information is available on www.mobius.eu.



www.vlerick.com/bpm

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